



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**For Immediate Release**

September 12, 2006

**TAMPA MAN SENTENCED FOR ROLE IN  
CONSPIRACY TO OPERATE HOUSES OF PROSTITUTION**

Tampa, FL - United States District Judge James D. Whittemore sentenced MARIO CASTILLO, age 56, on September 11, 2006, to a term of imprisonment of 33 months, to be followed by 3 years of supervised release. Castillo pled guilty on June 5, 2006, to a charge of conspiring to persuade and entice persons to travel in interstate commerce to facilitate the crime of prostitution.

According to the indictment and the plea agreement, Castillo worked at a house of prostitution in the Tampa Bay area between mid 2004 and October 2005. This house of prostitution, sometimes called a "21 house" catered to Hispanic clients and used the services of mostly Hispanic women who worked there as prostitutes. Many of these women came to the Tampa Bay area from other states or from outside of the United States to work at these houses of prostitution. Most of the prostitutes themselves were not legal aliens. Castillo was one of eleven persons named in an indictment which the United States filed in June 2005. In addition to Castillo, seven others have have pled guilty to conspiracy and

have been sentenced or are awaiting sentencing. One defendant was recently arrested and two remain fugitives.

This case was investigated by the United States Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jay L. Hoffer of the Tampa Division.